

In the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-41. (Cancelled)

42. (Currently amended) A method for processing a protein-containing material to produce a water soluble fertilizer comprising the following steps:

contacting reactants and creating a reaction mix; wherein the reactants comprise ~~an animal-derived protein-containing~~ a poultry waste material and an alkaline material, and wherein a reaction product is obtained which comprises peptones; ~~and~~

separating the reaction product by filtration, wherein the filtration comprises passing the reaction product through using a membrane filter having a pore size ranging from 10 Å to 50 Å, resulting in a lower molecular weight peptone-containing permeate and a higher molecular weight peptone-containing concentrate;

spray drying the concentrate; and

formulating a water soluble fertilizer using the spray dried concentrate;

wherein substantially all of the peptones in the concentrate have a molecular weight of at least about 1,000 Daltons, at least 75% of the peptones in the concentrate have a molecular weight between 1000Da and 6000 Da, and the mixture of peptones in the concentrate has a solubility in water of at least about 0.05 gm/ml.

43. (cancelled).

44. (Previously presented) The method described in claim 43, wherein the poultry waste material is selected from the group consisting of feathers, offal and combinations thereof.

45. (Previously presented) The method described in claim 42, wherein the alkaline material comprises sodium hydroxide.

46. (Previously presented) The method described in claim 42, wherein the concentration of the sodium hydroxide in the reaction mix ranges from 0.1 to 2.0 wt%.

47. (Previously presented) The method described in claim 42, wherein the pH of the reaction mix is 8 or higher.

48. (Previously presented) The method described in claim 42, wherein the temperature of the reaction mix is above 90° C.

49. (Previously presented) The method described in claim 42, wherein the reactants in the reaction mix are contacted for a period of less than six hours.

50-51. (cancelled)

52. (Previously presented) The method of claim 42, wherein a membrane filter is used which has pore size in the range from 20 Å to 30 Å.

53-55. (cancelled)

56. (Previously presented) The method of claim 42, further comprising the step of pre-filtering the obtained reaction product through a filter having a pore size ranging from about 0.2 microns to about 5 microns prior to the step of separating the reaction product.

57. (cancelled)

58. (Withdrawn) The product made by the process of claim 42.

59. (Withdrawn) The product of claim 58 having a dry whiteness of L exceeding 55, a dry flowability angle less than 60 degrees without tap, and a solubility in water of at least 0.01915 gm/ml.

60-61. (cancelled).